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PHILOTOXI ARDENÆ;

THE

WOODMEN OF ARDEN;

A LATIN POEM:

By JOHN MORFITT, Esq. Barrister at Law.

WITH

A TRANSLATION in Blank Verse;

Another in Rhyme;

ATTEMPTED IN THE MANNER OF DRYDEN,

And dedicated (by Permiſſion) to the Right Honourable the COUNTESS of AYLESFORD:

AND

An ESSAY on the Superiority of Dryden's Verſification over that of *Pope* and of the *Moderns*;

By JOSEPH WESTON.

Waller was ſmooth, but Dryden taught to join
The *varying* Verſe — the *full reſounding* Line —
The *long, majeſtic March* — and Energy Divine!

Pope.

BIRMINGHAM:
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ADVERTISEMENT.

THE following Lines were written merely for the Amuſement of a private Circle; but, an ingenious Friend having honoured them with a double Verſion, I hereby ſubmit them to the Eye of the Public: in Hopes that any Languor in the Original will be atoned for by the Spirit of the Tranſlations, and the judicious Criticiſm contained in the manly Eſſay that accompanies them.

Should they tend, in the leaſt Degree, to promote the truly Britiſh Exerciſe of ARCHERY, the Author's moſt ſanguine Expectations will be anſwered. The Landſcape deſcribed in the Opening ſhews that they were written in a Summer Month, and the Scene is laid in the FOREST OF ARDEN, near PACKINGTON-HALL, the Seat of the Right Honourable the EARL OF AYLESFORD.

Birmingham, Dec. 15, 1788.

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PHILOTOXI ARDENÆ.

Ὠχετο Μαιωτιςὶ λαβὼν εὐκάμπεα Τόξα. THEOC.

JURGIA rauca Fori valeant! Fraus aulica flexo
Poplite, Magnatum pulverulenta Cohors!
Urbe, nec invideo, vivant, vigeantque! remotum
Me procul à Strepitu rofcida Rura tenent.

Fulminet in *Verrem Cicero* fine More Britannus,
Et vehemens inftet *Foxius*, Ore boans.
Hîc fecura Quies, quæ me mihi multa dolentem
Reddidit; ægro Animo fola Medela, Quies.
Nefcio quid leviter meditanti condere Soles
Hîc licet, et *Flacci* fallere More Diem.

Mollis

THE

WOODMEN OF ARDEN.

They march like Scythians, with their pliant Bows.

THEOC.

FAREWELL, hoarſe Quarrels of the Bar! The Fraud
Of Courts, with ever-bending Knee, and all
The duſty Cohort of the Great, farewell!
Still let them live, ſtill flouriſh, in the City,
By me unenvied; me, whom—far remote
From Noiſe—the Country, bright with Dew, detains.

Let Britiſh *Cicero* thunder againſt *Verres*,
All Decency diſdaining; and let *Fox*,
Vehement *Fox*, preſs after, bellowing loud!
Here Quiet reigns; who me, long loſt in Grief,
Has to myſelf reſtor'd: here reigns ſecure.
Quiet! Sole Medicine to a Mind diſeas'd!
Here 'tis allow'd me, wrapt in Meditation,
(On what I know not) to deceive the Day,
And bury Suns, as *Flaccus* did before me.

Here

Mollis adeſt Somnus, quem nil niſi Paſſer iniquus
Diſcutit, aut Zephyrus Murmura grata ciens.
Ulmea ſtat Series, quæ magnâ protegat Umbrâ,
Languida dum nimio Sole Cicada crepat.
Herbæ quām redolent ſiccæ! vix viſa ſub albis
Nubibus, exercet Carmen Alauda ſuum.
Omnia ſunt Cordi: Mihi ſunt jucundus Apollo,
Largaque ſtillantes Attica Mella Libri.

Nec, *Digbæe*, procul tua Tecta Volumine curvo
Cœrula dant Fumum conſpicuique Lares.
Pulvere non ſordes, Vir conſultiſſime, docto,
Sed Charites tecum, et compta Minerva ſedent.
Atria conſurgunt ſublimibus alta Columnis,
Quæ propè, Dux Nemorum, *Fincius* ipſe colit.
Stirpe Decus repetens præclarâ, clarior Ipſe,
Cui Rura arrident Capripideſque Chori.

Hæcce

Here is ſoft Sleep, that Nothing but the Sparrow,
Th' unlucky Sparrow, or the murmuring Zephyr,
Can violate.—There ſtands an elmy Row,
Which may proteſt me by abundant Shade,
What Time the Graſshopper, all faint with Heat,
Chirps languidly. How ſweet the Hay! Scarce ſeen
In the white Clouds, the Lark purſues his Song.
All—all is well! Smiling Apollo mine—
And Books, diſtilling Stores of Attic Honey!

Nor afar off, O *Digby, from thy Roofs
Of Azure Hue, and thy conſpicuous Lares,
Ariſes Smoke, in many a wreathed Volume.
Thou art not ſordid, moſt accompliſh'd Lawyer,
With Duſt of ſqualid Learning; but with thee
Reſide the Graces, and *Minerva* dreſt!
At Hand, on Columns awfully ſublime,
Grand riſe the Halls which †*Finch* himſelf inhabits—
The Captain of the Groves; renewing ſtill
The Honours of a moſt illuſtrious Race,
Himſelf yet more illuſtrious: in whoſe Eye
The Country ſmiles, and ‡Cloven-footed Choir.

* Wriotheſly Digby, of Meriden, Eſq.

† The Earl of Aylesford.

‡ Strictly, *Goat-footed* Choirs; viz. *Pan*, *Sylvanus*, and the other rural Deities.

 Theſe

Hæcce ardet ſapiens, et " *aperto Vivere Voto* " *
Otiaque, Exemplo *Cæſaris*, alma ſequi.

Circiter Hunc Juvenum certat pharetrata Caterva,
Torquet et adductâ *Gnoſſia* Tela Manu:
Tela verenda quidem, quêis flevit *Gallia* fracta,
Lilia dum roſeo tincta Cruore rubent.
Lauriger *Edvardus*, pennato Marte timendus,
Hoſtica *Creſſiaci* Millia ſtravit Humi.

En! ubi gramineis ingens patet Area Campis,
Agmina *Sylvicolæ Nobilis* Arma parant.
Fallor? an Auriculis modò ſtridet Arundo volucris?
Fervet Opus; fervet dulcis Honoris Amor.

Strenuus intendit Nervum *Molandus*; honeſtos
Agnoſco Vultus, Herculeaſque Manus.

* The Earl of Aylesford's Motto.

Nec

Thefe Things he, fapient, loves ; to live with Wiflies
Open as Day, and (imitating *Cæfar*)
The Sweets of facred Leifure to enjoy.

Round him a Troop of quiver'd Youths contend,
And *Gnoffian* Weapons aim, with Hand drawn clofe.
Weapons! demanding ev'n our Veneration!
By which difmember'd—*Gallia* wept ; while, ting'd
With rofy Blood, her Lilies blufh'd : when *Edward*,
Fear'd for his feather'd War, and Laurel-crown'd,
The Fields of *Greffy* ftrew'd with hoftile Thoufands!

Lo! In the graffy Plains an Area wide
Expands! The *noble Forefter*'s vaft Hoft
Their Arms make ready.—Am I, then, deceiv'd?
Or does the flying Shaft, this very Moment,
Whizz in my ftartled Ear? Fervent the Sport—
And fervent is the Love of fweet Renown.

Stout **Moland* pulls the String ; I recognife
His honeft Face, and his Herculean Arm.

* Richard Moland, of Springfield Houfe, Efq.

Nor

Nec *Bowyerus* abeſt, *Tamam* qui potat amœnam
Rectus, ubi trinis aucta ſuperbit Aquis.
Arma gerit *Vates*, qui Carmine mulcet *Abonam*
Triſtis, et in Lacrymas plena Theatra trahit.
Nec latet *Hartoppus* ſplendens; hos ambit Honores
Hos quoque *Digbæus*, non ſine Laude Comes.
Yorkius exultans firmat Veſtigia greſſu,
Cornea dum viridi Gloria Veſte nitet.
Et jam lunavit quadruplex *Dilkius* Arcum;
Qualis in Aſpectu Purpura! quale Decus!
Bræus adit, Muſas et amans et amatus ab illis,
Tractat et auricomi lucida Tela Dei.

Stant Numeri innumeri, nam Flores Carmine,
quot ſunt
In *Sylvâ Ardenæ* quis numerare ſtudet?

Illi

Nor is juſt * *Bowyer* abſent ; he who drinks
The pleaſant *Tame*, where, by three Streams augmented,
The River ſwells with Pride.—The *Bard* † bears Arms,
Who, mournful, ſooths the *Avon* with his Song,
And crouded Theatres allures to Tears.
‡ Nor is unſeen the ſplendid *Hartopp* ; theſe —
Theſe *ſuperadded* Honours *Digby* claims :
Digby ! A Comrade of no vulgar Praiſe !
Firm is the Footſtep of exulting § *York*,
While on his green Veſt ſhines the *Spoon* of *Horn*.
And now the fourfold || *Dilke* has bent his Bow
In *Luna*'s waning Form ; what purple Bloom
Fluſhes his Countenance ! What youthful Grace !
*** *Bree*, too, is there, the Lover of the Nine ;
By all the Nine belov'd : and wields the Arms
Reſplendent of the God with Locks of Gold !

Numbers unnumber'd ſtand around ; for who
Is ſtudious to enumerate in Verſe
Each Flow'r that blows in *Arden*'s ample Foreſt ?

* Charles Bowyer Adderley, of Hams Hall, Eſq.
† Bertie Greatheed, of Guy's Cliff, Eſq. Author of the Regent.
‡ Edmund Cradock Hartopp, of Merevale Hall, Eſq.
§ Mr. Rd. York, of Kingshurſt.—The Horn-Spoon is given to that Markſman whoſe Arrow, tho' *within* the Target, is fartheſt from the Centre.
|| The four Sons of William Dilke, of Maxſtock Caſtle, Eſq.
*** The Rev. Mr. William Bree, of Coleſhill.

Illi *Phœbus* adeſt, cui terque quaterque beato
Percutit *auratum* certa Sagitta *Scopum*.
Porrigit applaudens Victoria candida Pennis
Innocuas Palmas, et ſine Labe Decus.
Multâ Laude ſedens Victor dat Jura, bibendi
Arbiter, et Græco Pocula More regit.

Sed Quæ Forma meos juxtà præſtinguit Ocellos,
Admovet et niveâ Spicula parva Manu?
Exercetne Choros *Diana?* an bellica ludit
Idalia, et Pueri dirigit Arma ſui?

Haud *Venus*, haud *Virgo Nemorum*, ſic Ore refulget:
Inceſſu proprio *Thynnea* vera patet.
Uxor amanda Tui pertentat, Εκηβολε *Finci*,
Tela ſuis Oculis exitioſa minus.
Sit tibi cura Salus, pulcherrima! Murice Vultus
Hic Labor inſueto dulce rubere dabit.

Hinc

Him *Phœbus* favours—thrice and four Times happy—
Whoſe certain Arrow ſtrikes the * *golden Mark.*
Vict'ry, in Robe of pureſt White array'd,
And with her Wings applauding, ſtretches out
Innocent Palms, and Glory without Stain.
The Victor, ſitting with abundant Praiſe,
Diſpenſes Laws, ſole Arbiter of Drinking;
And rules the Goblets in the † *Grecian* Mode.

What Form, approaching, dazzles thus my Eyes,
And little Arrows aims with ſnow-white Hand?
Does then *Diana* exerciſe her Choirs?
Or does *Idalia* play the Warriour,
And hurl her Boy's inevitable Darts?

Not *Venus* — not the *Virgin of the Groves* —
Smiles ſo refulgent; by peculiar Step
The real ‡ *Thynne* is known: far-ſhooting *Finch*,
Thy Wife, all-amiable, is trying Weapons
Leſs fatal than her Eyes. Be Health thy Care,
Moſt beauteous! For the Toil ſhall give thy Face
Sweetly to bluſh, with unaccuſtom'd Crimſon.

* The Centre of the Target is *gilt*.
† Aut bibe aut abi.—Either drink, or leave the Company.
‡ The Counteſs of Aylesford.

Hence

Hinc violare Genas dediſcat pieta Puella,
Hinc paret, et ſtabiles, et ſine Fraude, Roſas.

Nobilitate Pares Ambo, Virtutibus Ambo,
Quos habet in roſeâ Compede lætus Amor,
Vivite felices! lapſuræ Gloria Gentis!
Conjuge ſat Conjux dignus uterque ſuo!
Nec minūs, Aſſeclæ, ſi quid valet Aura Camœnæ,
Vos quibus in Studiis Phœbus uterque favet;
Semper Honos Veſter, *Philotoxi*, creſcet in Horas,
Dum *Nemus Ardenæ*, Vere tepente, viret.

Hence may the painted Fair unlearn her Cheeks
To violate; and, ſafely, hence procure
Roſes — both laſting and devoid of Guile.

Both equal in *Nobility*, and both
In *Virtues* equal, whom rejoicing Love
Holds in a roſy Chain, ſtill happy live!
Still live — the Glory of a ſinking Nation!
Conſort of Conſort worthy! And no leſs,
Ye Train of Followers — if the Muſe's Breath
Can aught avail — Ye, on whoſe generous Studies,
Propitious, *either* Phœbus ſmiles! Each Hour,
Ye *Philotoxites*, ſhall your Fame increaſe,
While green grow *Arden's Groves*, by genial Spring!

THE

WOODMEN OF ARDEN:

A POEM.

THE

WOODMEN OF ARDEN;

A POEM:

(ATTEMPTED IN THE MANNER OF DRYDEN)

From the LATIN of JOHN MORFITT, ESQ.

WITH

An ESSAY on the Superiority of DRYDEN's Verſification over that of *Pope* and of the *Moderns* ;

By JOSEPH WESTON.

Waller was ſmooth, but DRYDEN taught to join
The *varying* Verſe — the *full reſounding* Line —
The *long*, *majeſtic March* — and ENERGY DIVINE!

POPE.

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

THE

COUNTESS OF AYLESFORD.

MADAM,

WERE I to purſue the beaten Path of Dedication, I ſhould not miſs ſo favourable an Opportunity of expatiating on the inviting Topicks of BIRTH, RANK, BEAUTY, TALENTS, *and* ACCOMPLISHMENTS; *but ill ſhould I deſerve the enviable Privilege which I have obtained — of prefixing to this Page ſo* ILLUSTRIOUS *a Name —were I capable of taking the Advantage of your Ladyſhip's Condeſcenſion to violate the Delicacy of your Feelings.*

Nor would I wiſh, by an unneceſſary Diſcuſſion of a Subject on which only ONE *Perſon can poſſibly need Information, to leave an Opening for general Animadverſion; for—though to draw humble Merit, from the chilling Shade of Obſcurity, into the cheering Sunſhine of public Favour, might be to do eſſential Service to*

Mankind

Mankind — assuredly, to make a formal Blazon of GRACES *and of* VIRTUES *which have so long attracted* UNIVERSAL ATTENTION *would be justly considered by the World as a most impertinent Work of Supererogation.*

If an Exactness bordering on Servility should seem to have been the Object of the PRECEDING *Translation, the* FOLLOWING *one may boast,* MADAM, *of having aimed at a nobler Mark; and happy shall I be, if, in attempting to imitate the paraphrastic and unequal, but* GENEROUS *and* DARING *Manner of the immortal* DRYDEN, *I shall be found to have caught even the smallest Portion of a Spirit so* TRULY DIVINE!

I have the Honour to be,

With the most lively Gratitude,

MADAM,

Your Ladyship's most obedient,

And devoted Servant,

J. Weston.

PREFACE.

TO neglect the *modern* Stile of Verſification — to overlook even that which POPE introduced—and, profeſſedly, to copy from the old-faſhioned Model of DRYDEN —will excite ſome Degree of Surprize among thoſe who take for granted that POETIC DICTION has, ſince his Time, received conſiderable *Improvement*.—But, to confeſs the Truth, I cannot help thinking that ENGLISH RHYME was brought by that wonderful Man to the *Acme* of Perfection; and that it has been, for many Years, gradually declining from GOOD to *indifferent* — and from *indifferent* to BAD.

I am not unaware that a Sentiment ſo unfavourable to *moſt* of my Contemporaries, and ſo oppoſite to Prejudices long received and obſtinately retained, will, probably, be conſidered as the raſh and romantic Aſſertion of a vain and preſumptuous INNOVATOR, and be treated with all the Severity uſually exerciſed againſt Notions which are looked

upon as heterodox. — But ſuch Severity would be flagrant Injuſtice.—The Opinion which I have expreſſed is neither dictated by Vanity nor prompted by an Affectation of Singularity; but is, in Fact, the Reſult of much Reflection and of very minute Inveſtigation.

To do Juſtice to the Subject would be to extend a *Preface* — to a VOLUME; but it may not be unneceſſary to prove that I have not hazarded ſo *bold* a Declaration on *ſlight* Grounds: and that, while I endeavour to convince my *Reader*, I am, at leaſt, convinced *myſelf*.

The Poetry of DRYDEN, though allowed to be, in *general*, CORRECT, ENERGETIC, and HARMONIOUS, is alſo ſaid to be *ſometimes* CARELESS, LANGUID, and PROSAIC; in Fine, (to uſe his own Words, when ſpeaking of MILTON,) he is charged with having "*Flats* among "his *Elevations*." — They who *bring* the Charge uſually accompany it with an Exclamation of "how unfortunate "was the *poor Man*, whoſe Neceſſities compelled him to "precipitate his Works to the Preſs in *ſo unfiniſhed* a State!"

I will admit the Juſtice of the *Accuſation*, but wave, as entirely unneceſſary, the *Apology*. — *Poor* he certainly was

— to

— to the never-dying INFAMY of the Age which he so splendidly adorned; but his Poverty has little to do with the Question in Debate. — Many of his Lines *seem*, 'tis true, to have wanted his *last Touches*; but those last Touches, I am persuaded, were not *hastily* NEGLECTED— but *deliberately* DENIED. His intuitive Judgment, doubtless, suggested that all Things figure *but* by COMPARISON; and that even EXCELLENCE, *undiversified*, must, at length, FATIGUE. He, therefore, *subdued* his Stile *occasionally*— to burst upon his Reader with the *greater Splendour*, when the Subject demanded a LOFTIER LAY.

But how reconcile this Supposition to his Remark respecting MILTON—which seems to imply that no FLATS *should* be admitted among the ELEVATIONS?—Very easily. —Steadiness and Consistency were, by no Means, Characteristics of the Doctrines which DRYDEN promulgated, in his numerous Prefaces;—Doctrines which he varied, without much Scruple, as Times or Circumstances changed: and, in the present Case, Dread of MILTON's superiour Genius, and Detestation of his political Principles, might, reasonably, be supposed somewhat to pervert his natural Candour, and somewhat to bias his wonted Impartiality.

The

The Poetry of POPE, though leſs enriched by CLASSICAL KNOWLEDGE, and leſs illumined by VIVID IMAGINATION, appears, however, at *firſt* ſight, to greater Advantage than that of DRYDEN; as it is, certainly, more elaborately *correct*, and more mechanically *regular* — more delicately *poliſhed*, and more ſyſtematically *dignified*. — But are theſe *really* Advantages? — Let us examine.

Does the ſkilful PAINTER bring *all* his Figures forward on the Canvas, and beſtow the laſt Hand upon *every* Part of the Picture?

Does the MUSICIAN *cloy* the Ear with an eternal Succeſſion of *harmonious* Sounds, uncontraſted by the dire but neceſſary *Diſcords?*

Does the Ornament of the STAGE laviſh Emphaſis, Expreſſion, Attitude, and Action upon *every* Line of *every* Sentence?

Does the BEAUTY of a BIRTH-NIGHT concentrate *all* her Jewels (unrelieved by Interſtices of black Velvet) in one INTOLERABLE BLAZE?

Would

Would the FACE OF CREATION appear more lovely, were it—inſtead of "riſing into Inequalities, diverſified by the "varied Exuberance of abundant Vegetation"—to exhibit one immenſurable "Velvet Lawn, ſhaven by the Scythe, "and levelled by the Roller?"

Why then muſt POETRY adopt a prepoſterous Plan of *Equaliſation* which her SISTER MUSES reject with Scorn —and aſpire to an *imaginary* Perfection, alike unknown to NATURE and to ART?

The Queſtion ſeems to lie in ſo ſmall a Compaſs, and to be ſo eaſy of Determination, that one feels inclined to enquire how ſo abſurd a Notion could poſſibly gain a Footing, and maintain its Ground, in an Age ſo poliſhed and enlightened as to have acquired the Title of AUGUSTAN?—Great Events, 'tis certain, ariſe ſometimes from very trivial Cauſes; but never, ſurely, was ſo important a Revolution in the *Parnaſſian* Realms produced by Means ſo utterly contemptible!

When DRYDEN's Sun was ſet, darting its * brighteſt Ray at its Departure, POPE was beginning to dawn on the poetical Hemiſphere.—A young Man of lively Talents, with

* Dryden's inimitable Ode is ſaid to have been his laſt Production.

 a pecu-

a peculiar "Knack at Rhyming," could not fail to attract the Notice of many would-be *Mecænases*; among others, one WALSH undertook to usher this rising Genius into the World: he did more; he affected to point out a Way, by which his Pupil should surpass all who had gone before him. —"Mr. POPE, (said he) there is *one* Path as yet entirely "untrodden—the Path of *Correctness:* DRYDEN was a "great Poet—but he had not *Leisure* to be correct.—Seize "the glorious Opportunity; supply the Deficiency, and "be immortal!"

In an evil Hour did the ambitious young Bard hearken to the fatal Advice of "*knowing* Walsh" (as he somewhere calls him); and, hoping to supply this *supposed* Deficiency, he began to *labour*, and *stiffen*, and *polish*, and *refine:* 'till, having discarded whatever seemed *loose*, or *languid*, or *harsh*, or *prosaic*, his Verse flowed in one equal, smooth, mellifluous Stream; marked by an almost total Want of that VARIETY of Pause, Accent, Cadence, and Diction, so eminently conspicuous in his incomparable Predecessor, and so absolutely essential to the Harmony of true Poetry.

The *Thought* is so seldom suffered to stray *beyond* the Bounds of the Couplet, and so frequently wire-drawn merely to end

with

with it—*one* Part of a Line ſo exactly reflects the *other*—and there is ſuch a Paucity of *Triplets* and of *Alexandrines*, (the *Break*, too, in the latter, ſo regularly at the *ſixth* Syllable,) —that even the moſt ingenious *Alluſions*, the moſt ſtriking, beautiful, and graceful *Imagery*, the moſt perſpicuous and pointed *good Senſe*, and the moſt elegant and nervous *Expreſſion*—with all their Powers united—find it difficult to render the tireſome UNIFORMITY of his VERSIFICATION ſupportable.

To the officious Interpoſition of this ſame WALSH, then, we are indebted for the Contamination of the HELICONIAN FOUNTAIN, for near a Century! *Riſum teneatis?*

But ſo material a Change in the Conſtitution of Poetry could not be expected to take Place, without ſome literary Convulſions.—The Diſciples of DRYDEN were ardent in their Veneration, formidable by their Numbers, and reſpectable by their Rank.—Violent was the Clamour, and tedious was the Conteſt.—POPE, however, in the End—by Means not very *honourable* indeed—proved triumphant.

In the Courſe of my Reſearches, I have found conſiderable Amuſement, (though alloyed, in no ſmall Degree, by a Mixture

Mixture of Scorn and Indignation,) in tracing and developing the insidious Arts which he suffered his *Friends* to practise, in order to undermine the Reputation of the deceased Poet, and to asperse the Characters of his living Supporters; and if a Work, which, for a longer Term of Years than that prescribed by HORACE, has been *incarcerated* in my Closet, should ever escape into Light, POPE's *Goodness of Heart* would be no longer *problematical*:—at present, I shall content myself with observing, that HE, while the injured DRYDEN *sunk* in the public Estimation, was *exalted* to the vacant Chair, and proposed as a bright EXEMPLAR to all succeeding Bards.

But, as HE was supposed to have improved upon *his* Master, OUR Poets seem ambitious of improving upon *theirs*.—HE rejected every Thing that was not *rich*; THEY reject every Thing that is not *brilliant*.—HE is every where *clear* and *manly*; THEY not unfrequently torture into *Obscurity*, and refine into *Imbecility*.

To confirm and illustrate my Observation, by selecting *Instances* of harsh Construction and fantastic Inversion — Tinsel Phrases and tinkling Compound-Epithets — were a Task as easy as it were unpleasant and unwise. — The *Genus irritabile*

irritabile Vatum is proverbial; and I ſhall, probably, find Inconvenience enough, from having *diſturbed* the Hornet's Neſt, by a GENERAL Cenſure, without the additional Imprudence of pulling it about my Ears by a PARTICULAR ENUMERATION. — Suffice it, therefore, to obſerve, that the *modern* Syſtem appears deciſively to exclude every Mode of Expreſſion from *Poetry* which is ſo unlucky as to find a Place in *Proſe*.

Let me not be miſunderſtood.—POETIC DICTION, and that ALONE, is the Object of my Reprobation; nor, even in *that* Department, am I inſenſible of ſome very *ſplendid* EXCEPTIONS: but flatter myſelf, as the Influence of *their* Example gradually *expands*, that I ſhall ſtill live to ſee the the *apparent* NEGLIGENCE but *real* ART—the *dignified* SIMPLICITY—the *unaffected* SUBLIMITY—and the *endleſs* VARIETY of the PRINCE OF RHYME (as Mr. HAYLEY juſtly ſtiles him) once more ſhine forth, in the Fullneſs of Beauty — the Admiration of all — but *cold*, *mechanical* VERSIFIERS, and *taſteleſs*, *blind* IDOLATORS!

My Zeal has already carried me beyond the Limits which I propoſed to myſelf; but, having mentioned the ALEXANDRINE, I feel an irreſiſtible Impulſe to employ a

 few

few more Pages in an Attempt to emancipate one of the brighteſt Ornaments of Engliſh Verſification from thoſe Shackles which POPE *impoſed*, and which his SUCCESSORS ſeem determined to *perpetuate*.

THEY, with one Conſent, divide the Alexandrine into *equal* Parts; and the facetious Manufacturers of thoſe Treatiſes which ſo ridiculouſly pretend to teach the *Art of Poetry* (as if POETS, like PEERS, not happening to be *born* ſuch, could be *made!)* aver that it *ought* to be ſo divided.—The Pigmies would ſcarcely *deſerve* Confutation; but a GIANT has thrown down his Gauntlet, in the ſame Cauſe; and, if I heſitate while I take it up, I heſitate from RESPECT,—*not* FEAR.—This redoubtable Critic has, for *once* at leaſt, ſubſtituted dogmatical *Aſſertion* for *Argument* and *Truth*; and HE is, ſurely, little to be dreaded, who, (as if grown wanton by Succeſs, and confident of Victory without a Blow,) attempting to appal by empty *Sounds*, diſcards his ponderous *Spear*, and his enormous *Shield!*

But let us hear.—In the Life of DRYDEN, he remarks—"the *Alexandrine*, though much his Favourite, is not always "very diligently fabricated by him. It *invariably* requires "a Break at the *ſixth* ſyllable; a Rule which the modern

"FRENCH

"FRENCH POETS never violate, but which DRYDEN "ſometimes *neglected* :

"And with paternal Thunder vindicates his Throne."

Si ſic OMNIA *diXiſſet*—Dr. JOHNSON would ſcarcely have been conſidered as an *Arbiter Elegantiarum* in Poetry; for a weaker Paragraph was never penned.—It is open and unguarded, at all Points.—The Principle is falſe; the Authority inſufficient; and the Example the moſt unfortunate that could have been adduced.—

'Tis pleaſant to find the good Doctor appealing to the Practice of *that Nation*, againſt whoſe Deciſions he has, on ſo many Occaſions, proteſted; and 'tis equally pleaſant to find him bringing forward, as an Inſtance of DRYDEN'S *Negligence*, a Line, which—for *harmonic Energy*—has not a Superiour!—I would defy even the melodious Voice, and matchleſs Judgment, of a SEWARD—with all her known *Partiality* for POPE—to convey more Faſcination into her Favourite's fineſt Line than that *already* poſſeſſes which is the Object of Dr. JOHNSON'S Cenſure; Cenſure—which will, probably, be conſidered as of no very great Importance, when proceeding from one who cannot, reaſonably, be ſuppoſed to have ſtudied with any extraordinary Attention

that

that Species of Verſe which (for aught that appears to the contrary) he never attempted to fabricate:—ſince—in his WHOLE WORKS—it would be as arduous a Taſk to find an *Alexandrine*—as an *immoral Expreſſion!*

Nor will an Advocate for VARIETY, who treats even the high Authority of POPE with ſo little Ceremony, be expected to pay much Deference to the mere *gratis dictum* of his ſlaviſh IMITATOR! An Imitator ſo *very* ſlaviſh—though *equal* to his Original in SMOOTHNESS, and *ſuperiour*, perhaps, in STRENGTH—that his collected Poems, abounding in every Excellence but *one*, afford only *three* TRIPLETS, and a *ſolitary* Inſtance of the Senſe *overflowing* the Couplet, to terminate in the Beginning of the third Line: and yet a Remark, which accompanies a Quotation from the *Hind* and the *Panther*, evinces that he was far from inſenſible of the *latter Beauty*.

I, alſo, will quote the exquiſite Lines in Queſtion; that they, who have ſo haſtily aſſerted that POPE *heightened* "the Magic of that Verſification" which he acknowledged to have learned from DRYDEN, may repent at Leiſure.

"A Milk-

" A Milk-white HIND, immortal and unchang'd,
" *Fed* on the LAWNS, and in the FOREST *rang'd*;
" *Without* UNSPOTTED, INNOCENT *within*,
" She *fear'd* no DANGER, for ſhe *knew* no SIN.
" Yet had ſhe oft been chas'd with Horns and Hounds,
" And Scythian Shafts; and many winged Wounds
" Aim'd at her HEART; was often forc'd to fly,
" And* DOOM'D to *Death*, though FATED *not to die*."

" Theſe Lines are lofty, elegant, and muſical, *notwithſtanding* " the Interruption of the PAUSE, of which the Effect is " rather *Increaſe* of Pleaſure by VARIETY than *Offence* by " RUGGEDNESS."

* The delicate Diſcrimination in this Line has excited the Mirth of MONTAGUE and PRIOR, in that wretched Abortion of ſilly Malevolence which the Spirit of Patty *once* cried up, as a conſummate Model of argumentative Acuteneſs, and of genteel Satire; but whoſe Merits TIME, who happens to be neither Whig nor Tory, has *now* very accurately aſcertained.—" If *you*, MR. BAYES, (ſay theſe well-man- " nered and ſagacious Critics,) were *doom'd* to be HANG'D—what you were *fated* " to would be of very little Conſequence." As if *doom'd* and *fated* were *really* SYNONYMOUS Terms — and *Execution* muſt be the INEVITABLE Conſequence of *Condemnation!*

Ex Pede HERCULEM!——Reader, if thou likeſt this *Sample*, (given to thee from Memory, but faithful, at leaſt, to the "*friendly Meaning*,") MIDDLE ROW, in HOLBORN, may, perchance, furniſh thee with the *whole* delectable Dialogue, between the CITY MOUSE and the COUNTRY MOUSE!

Who, on reading this judicious Obſervation, will not wonder that the Remarker imitated only *once* what he thus profeſſes to admire?—But Wonder will ſubſide, on recollecting that the Period when JOHNSON formed that Stile which aſtoniſhed even POPE *himſelf*, by its Similitude to his *own*, was preciſely the Period when the latter, having cruſhed all Oppoſition, reigned SOLE DICTATOR over the Commonwealth of Rhyme:— a Poem, therefore, conſtructed on any other Principles than thoſe which he had eſtabliſhed, might reaſonably have deſpaired of a favourable Reception from the Public.

But, to return to the ALEXANDRINE.—"It *invariably* requires (ſays JOHNSON) a Break at the *ſixth* Syllable."—Did not the whole Tenour of a Life, ſpent in the uniform Practice of almoſt every Chriſtian Virtue, forbid the Suppoſition—I ſhould imagine that the weak Attempt to ſupport this ſtrange Aſſertion by ſtrange Authority betrayed a Conſciouſneſs of Inability to ſupport it by Reaſon.—But REASON, it muſt be allowed, is not fully competent to decide the Diſpute; for, though the Regulation of the *Senſe* belongs entirely to the JUDGMENT, that of the *Sound* is more peculiarly the Province of the EAR.—POPE's Deficiency in the latter Reſpect was notorious; his Indifference to MUSIC is

upon

upon Record: and I am inclined to believe that the *Critic* bore, in that Particular, no very diſtant Reſemblance to the *Poet.*

The following Examples will prove that the *Break* in the Alexandrine ought NOT to be *invariably* at the *ſixth* Syllable; but that its Effect may be every way as powerful when it is placed at the *ſeventh.*

"And with paternal THUNDER—VINDICATES his Throne."

"And, like another HELEN—FIR'D another TROY."

DRYDEN.

The ACTION, deſcribed in *each* of theſe Examples, being *reſerved* for the Syllable *immediately ſucceeding* the PAUSE, ſtrikes with added Force; and the *ſonorous* ROLLING of the *former*, (which ſo ſingularly *echoes* to the SENSE,) would not have been *increaſed*, had the Line—with the Formality of a Pair of folding Doors—opened *exactly* in the MIDDLE.

Perhaps the Alexandrine ought GENERALLY to *hinge* on the ſixth Syllable; and it will commonly be found that, provided *that* Syllable be GRAVE and the *next* ACUTE, the Break may be made at *either* of them, with equal Propriety: —but even *this* Rule is not INVARIABLE; for Inſtances

may

may be produced, where the Cuſtom (like that of the DANISH USURPER) "is more honoured in the *Breach* than "the *Obſervance*."

"Vāſt Rūĭns cŏme ălōng — rēnt frŏm thĕ ſmōkĭng Wālls."

DRYDEN.

"Whīch, lĭke ă wōundĕd Snāke — drāgs ĭts flōw Lēngth ălōng."

POPE.

Stark blind muſt that Reader be, who is not ſtruck with the *pictureſque* Verſification of both theſe Lines; to which the *Inverſion* of the uſual Mode of *accenting* the SEVENTH and EIGHTH Syllables contributes, in no inferiour Degree.

But why muſt the Pauſe be confined to *either* of the Syllables in Debate?—And why muſt only *one* Pauſe be admitted? —My next Quotation will ſhew that, by *deviating* from the cuſtomary Method, one *third more* SENSE may be compriſed within as *narrow a Compaſs* — without ſuſtaining any Inconvenience from Want of Elbow-room.

"Still cheerful; ever conſtant to his Call;
"By MANY *follow'd*—*lov'd* by MOST—*admir'd* by ALL!"

DRYDEN.

And why muſt Lines of FOURTEEN Syllables be *excluded?* — Their Effect, when *ſparingly* and *ſkilfully* introduced, is conſiderable — admirably calculated as they are to expreſs NUMBER and DURATION. "What

" What Help from *Art*'s Endeavours can we have?
" GIBBONS but *gueſſes*, nor is *ſure* to ſave:
" But MAURUS ſweeps whole *Pārĭſhĕs*—and peoples *every* Grave."

DRYDEN

" Thy Mother well deſerves that ſhort Delight,
" The nauſeous Qualms of *tēn lōng Mōnths*—and TRAVAIL to requite."

DRYDEN'S VIRGIL.

Whoever attends to the *accenting* of the ſixth, ſeventh, and eighth Syllables, in each Example, will find additional Reaſon to admire the Genius and the Taſte which could raiſe *imitative* Harmony to ſo exalted an Height; for the Rapidity of medical Devaſtation in the One, and the Tedioufneſs of lingering Indiſpoſition in the Other, are as forcibly conveyed to the *Ear*, by the artful Conſtruction of the MEASURE, as they are faithfully pourtrayed to the *Mind*, by the appropriative Energy of the EXPRESSION.

To multiply Inſtances would be ſuperfluous; enough has been ſaid, I truſt, clearly to demonſtrate what many have ſuppoſed to be incapable of Demonſtration—viz. that POPE is not *infallible*, nor his BIOGRAPHER invulnerable.

If this ſhould ſeem the Language of *Exultation*, let it be remembered that it is, likewiſe, the Language of *Conviction*;

 and—

and—to repreſs the gathering Sneer, which an *Introduction* ſo diſproportionate to the Size of the POEM may tempt—let ill-natured CRITICISM be informed, that to juſtify the *Stile* of the following Tranſlation is but a *ſubordinate* Object: my principal Deſign, in this PREFATORY ESSAY, being to ſeize an apt Occaſion—unexpectedly preſented—of co-operating with *thoſe* who ſo meritorioufly endeavour to reſtore to DRYDENICAL PURITY that PIERIAN SPRING which POPE *corrupted*, and which his more daring *Imitators* have POISONED!

With Regard to my OWN *Verſification*, I muſt acknowledge, that, however excellent a *Mark* I may have ſet in View, I have not the Vanity to ſuppoſe that my *Succeſs* has kept Pace with my *Exertions*.—Whoever tries the Experiment which I have tried will find that to *attempt* is not to *execute;* and that it is more eaſy to *admire* than to *emulate*.—Yet, rewarded for my Labour by the Conſciouſneſs of having *endeavoured* well, I ſhall not bluſh, if reminded of the vaſt Diſparity between the MODEL and the COPY.—*That* COPY—imperfect as it is — would have been ſtill *more* imperfect, had I ſelected a MODEL of leſs diſtinguiſhed Eminence; and, had I not, in Imitation of my GREAT MASTER, diverſified my STILE—*varied* the PAUSE, ACCENT, and CADENCE

—and

— and abundantly bespangled my Verse with TRIPLETS and with ALEXANDRINES — my Performance would have appeared before the awful Tribunal of the PUBLIC with still *greater* Diffidence—as it would, indubitably, have preferred still *humbler* Claims to PARDON or to PRAISE.

An Examination of the respective Merits of a *literal* and of a *liberal* Version is not necessary; it may not, however, be improper to remark that, among the Few who have seen the Translations in Manuscript, SOME, whose Opinions I have been accustomed to revere, have given a Preference to the *Blank Verse*; a Circumstance which (though it *surprised* me) has induced me to publish *both:* with the pleasing Expectation of accommodating different Tastes.

If, after all, I shall be thought, in the following TRANSLATION, to have departed rather too widely from the beautiful ORIGINAL, and shall be found — in the Glow of Composition, or in the Ardour of Friendship — sometimes to have interpolated an *Idea*, and sometimes to have expanded a *Character* — it should be considered, in Extenuation, that POETRY, like ETHER, is a very *subtile* and *volatile* SPIRIT; which, (as SIR JOHN DENHAM has finely expressed it,) "in pouring from one Language to another, EVAPORATES:"

and

and that, "if a *new* Spirit be not added in the *Transfusion*, "little more than a *Caput mortuum* will remain."

That *my* weak Efforts toward undeceiving the deluded Admirers of POPE will prove, in any Degree, *successful*, I dare not promise to myself.—But speedy and effectual (I am persuaded) will be the *Conversion* of all those Advocates for a *close* TRANSLATION who shall peruse MISS SEWARD's most enchanting Amplification of HORACE's noble Ode; inserted in the Gentleman's Magazine for October last:—where the BRITISH POETESS *towers* as much above the ROMAN BARD—as she is acknowledged to do above most of her *own* Nation, in *Beauty*, *Affability*, *Genius*, *Taste*, *Benevolence*—and FILIAL PIETY!

THE

THE

WOODMEN OF ARDEN.

ADIEU, hoarſe Brawlers of th' opprobrious Bar,
Who wage of Words the never-ending War!—
The flattering Knee—the ſolemn Farce of State—
And all the duſty Cohort of the GREAT!
Nurs'd in the *City*, let them live and reign;
I *cannot* ENVY what I *muſt* DISDAIN!
Remote from courtly Craft, and legal Noiſe,
Mine are the *Country*'s calmer—purer Joys.
Let *Britain*'s greater CICERO ſtill proclaim,
With Voice of Thunder, and with Words of Flame,
That VERRES reeks with plunder'd ASIA's Gore—
And furious Fox re-bellow to the Roar!

Here loſt Tranquillity, long loſt, I find;
Potent—when countleſs Griefs convuls'd my Mind—
My Thoughts, like Oil on ſwelling Waves, to calm:
Tranquillity! The Soul's celeſtial Balm!
'Tis mine to do what *Horace' ſelf* has done—
Beguile the Day, and, trifling down the Sun,
Sink, with his ſetting Beam, in lov'd Repoſe,
Soft, downy Sleep, that no Diſturbance knows,
Save when the roguiſh Sparrow twitters nigh,
Or murmuring Zephyr heaves a paſſing Sigh.

Yon Row of Elms, umbrageous, from the Heat
Of blazing Noon may yield a kind Retreat;
While the parch'd Graſshopper, his little Throat
Diſtending, chirps his Plaint with feeble Note.
How ſweetly redolent the new-mown Hay!
How ſweetly trills the Lark his liquid Lay,
As, half-unſeen, the ſnow-white Clouds among,
He ſoars—the Envy of the plumy Throng!

My

My Heart's at Eaſe! New Joys my Boſom fill!
For mine the God who rules th' *Aonian* Hill,
And Books, which *Attic* Honey plenteouſly diſtil!

At Hand, O Digby, to Cerulean Skies,
From Roofs Cerulean, ſpiral Volumes riſe,
Impell'd by *Lares* that conſpicuous ſhine;
Thoſe Roofs — thoſe hoſpitable Roofs — are thine!
Thou Ornament of Law! No ſordid Ruſt
Of canker'd Learning can thy Mind encruſt;
Nor ſcorn the *Graces*, unadorn'd, to reſt
With Thee; nor Pallas — to Advantage dreſt!

On Pillars that *deride* corroding Time,
Yon beauteous Manſion rears its Head ſublime!
There He whom Art reveres, whom Science loves —
Aylesford reſides; the Captain of the Groves:
Boaſt of the brighteſt Race — himſelf more bright —
Whom Sylvan Scenes and Sylvan Gods delight!

Him

HIM Heav'n has giv'n, and Wiſdom taught to prize,
The Wiſh that ſcorns the Meanneſs of Diſguiſe,
And Tranſports that from heart-felt Leiſure ſpring—
With Dignity enjoy'd—while copying from his KING!

Around their CHIEF a well-ſelected Band
Of quiver'd Youths, impatient, take their Stand,
And *Scythian* Shafts direct—with firm, *retracted* Hand.
O ſacred Shafts, renown'd in Britiſh Songs!
Ye ſwift Avengers of a Nation's Wrongs!
Proud GAUL has wept your Wounds in many a Flood,
While her ſtain'd Lilies bluſh'd with roſy Blood;
When hoſtile Thouſands ſunk on *Creſſy*'s Plain,
By laurell'd EDWARD's winged Weapons ſlain!

Behold! On the green Lawn, expanding wide,
An Area vaſt!—And lo! With generous Pride,
(The Hunter's Garb belies the Soldier's Air,)
The *noble Woodman*'s Troops their Arms prepare!
Do I, then, *hear*—or only *ſeem* to hear—
The flying Arrow whizzing in my Ear?

The

The Conteſt glows; each glowing Face diſplays
How ardent the Deſire of honied Praiſe!
Yon Archer ſtrains the String; his manly Grace,
His Arm *Herculean*, and ingenuous Face,
Proclaim him MOLAND!—There (of virtuous Fame)
Is ADDERLEY, who quaffs the pleaſant TAME;
TAME—who, of *triple* Augmentation proud,
Rolls his united Streams, and roars his Joy aloud!

The BARD bears Arms, who, AVON's Banks along,
Sooths liſtening *Naiads* with his mournful Song;
Skill'd—or to freeze the Soul with frantic Fears—
Or melt admiring Myriads into Tears.
There HARTOPP, *elegantly* ſplendid, ſhines;
DIGBY—in whom each ſocial Charm *combines*—
With Honours yet unſated, pants for more:
And adds a greener Laurel to his Store.
With Footſtep firm as his undaunted Breaſt,
Exulting YORK, diſtinguiſh'd from the Reſt,
Diſplays the *Corneous Glory*—on his verdant Veſt.

The *four-fold* DILKIAN *Band* like *Cynthia*'s Horns
Bend their elaſtic Bows ; — What Grace adorns
Each Form *Fraternal!* — How impaſſion'd ſpeaks
The *Tyrian Tide* along their glowing Cheeks !
BREE, whoſe mild Manners match his Mind, is there ;
To whom the *Patron-God*, with golden Hair,
His lucid Weapons not diſdains to lend :
BREE ! Skill'd with *Genius* tempering *Taſte* to blend !
By every Muſe befriended ! Every Muſe's Friend !

Numbers INNUMERABLE *conceal* the Plain ;
For who each Flower, within the wide Domain
Of ARDEN's woody Wild, that drinks the Day—
In hoarſe—and everlaſting Song—would painfully
diſplay ?
Bleſt, bleſt is HE — pre-eminently bleſt,
On whom propitious *Phœbus* ſhines confeſt ;
Whoſe Shaft, unerring, raviſh'd Crouds behold
Wing its triumphant Way, and ſtrike the *gleaming*
Gold !

Clapping

Clapping her Pinions, Victory ſwift deſcends,
And bloodleſs Trophies—guiltleſs Palms—extends.
Aloft the Conqueror ſits, with Glory crown'd!
Lord of the Feaſt, he deals the Goblet round;
His Charge with ev'n a *Grecian* Strictneſs plies:
And who *rejects* the ſparkling Beverage—*flies*.

But WHO, with Form ſo fair, and Air ſo bland,
And Eyes that win—that *dazzle*—that COMMAND—
Aims tiny Arrows with a ſnowy Hand?
Does, then, *Diana* train her buſkin'd Maids?
Or does the Tenant of th' *Idalian* Shades
T' enact the *Amazon* her Skill employ,
And wield the Arms of her all-conqu'ring Boy?
No.—Nor the Virgin-Huntreſs of the Groves,
Nor the bright Queen of all the laughing Loves,
So radiant ſmiles, or ſo majeſtic moves:
By Step *appropriate*—Sweetneſs *all her own*—
And DIGNITY DIVINE—the *genuine* THYNNE
is known!

Thy

Thy lovely Spouſe, thou PRINCE OF ARCHERS, tries
Weapons far leſs *deſtructive* than her Eyes!
The generous Sport purſue! Be Health thy Care!
The grateful Toil (thou faireſt of the Fair!)
Shall give thy Cheeks with livelier Bloom to glow;
With Bloom that Art's pale Victim ne'er ſhall know:
Till, viewing *Thee*, the poor, repentant Maid
Unlearns to feign—relies on *Nature*'s Aid—
And guileleſs Roſes gains—too permanent to fade!

Equal alike in *Virtue* and in *Birth*—
Worthy—and conſcious of your mutual Worth—
Whom Love, rejoicing, binds with flowery Band—
The *Grace*—the GLORY of a ſinking Land—
Live ever bleſt!—And you—ye following Train
Of PHILOTOXITES—if not fondly vain
The Muſe—if EITHER *Phœbus* Life can give—
Shall ever happy—ever honour'd—live;
Increaſing Fame increaſing Hours ſhall bring,
While blows o'er ARDEN'S GROVES the genial
Breath of Spring!

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